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European credit structure, with enforced liquidation, might easily drain so much gold from us that our price level could be maintained only by transforming our "bullion certificates" into inconvertible notes. I am not sure that Professor Fisher would object to this. In this book he puts more emphasis than before upon the control of prices by the control of the number of certificates in circulation and less upon the direct effect of changing the amount of gold in the monetary unit.

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### USHER, INTRODUCTION TO THE INDUSTRIAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND<sup>1</sup>

It is a trite saying that the Holy Roman Empire was not holy, not Roman, and not an empire. And so with the scholarly book under review: it is too advanced to be called an Introduction; it is not strictly confined to industrial history; and it is not exclusively concerned with England. Two long chapters deal with manufacture outside of England, in the ancient world and in medieval France. In a book on the general history of industry, such studies would be necessary; but since there is no proved connection between the industry of the ancient period and of medieval France on the one hand and English industry on the other, some may question whether the author is justified in going so far afield. The subject of English history is introduced, not by a chapter on Anglo-Saxon industry but by one on "The Population of England, 1086-1700." Then follows a chapter on the "Village and Manor," satisfactory in itself but not made contributory to the general theme of industrial history. Thirty

<sup>1</sup> An Introduction to the Industrial History of England. By A. P. Usher, Assistant Professor of Economics, Cornell University. Houghton Mifflin Co., 1920. Pp. xix, 529. \$2.50.

pages on town trade carry us further in the latter field. We get nearer to English industry in the eighth chapter, "The Development of Gilds in England"; but it is not until two-fifths of the space have been used that we arrive at manufacture in the narrow sense, in a chapter on "The Woollen Industries, 1450-1750." At this point we think that we are under way, but the next chapter sidetracks us onto "The Enclosure Movement and Land Reform." There would be ample excuse for treating such a subject if it was closely correlated by the author with industrial development, but this he does not do. At the middle of the book the industrial revolution is introduced and presented in an informing, tho not novel, way. One cannot but feel that it is the economist, and not the historian, who is writing the history of English industry, when stress is put on early industry and then on the industrial revolution without adequate treatment of the significant intervening period. After the chapters on the industrial revolution comes the subject of labor and capital. The two chapters on railways might be made significant for the study of English industry if transportation had been related to progress in industry. Indeed this is a serious criticism of the whole book: the parts, good in themselves, are not combined to form a connected story.

We may pick out three propositions of general significance. The first is that from at least the days of the historic fairs and of the commercial towns of the Middle Ages, there has been a duality in commerce; not a local trade followed by a wider trade, but local and "cosmopolitan" trade existing side by side, one the counterpart of the other. Let us hope that this is the last lance that it will be necessary to break against the persistent misconceptions of the German historical economists, that a local and more or less closed trade was followed by a national and an international trade.

The second general proposition, explicitly called the "thesis" of the book, is that "commerce is the conditioning factor in industrial development" (p. 39). This is so widely accepted that it needs no comment, provided by "commerce" we mean, not a primary cause but a resultant of many factors

working themselves out in the exchange of goods and services. It is questionable whether the thesis is adequately maintained in the present book. Three causes of the industrial revolution are set forth: mechanical achievement, commercial changes, and physiographic factors. It is probable that in all economic history there is no clearer illustration of the influence of the market upon industrial development than in the industrial revolution. It seems to the reviewer that the author in justice to his own central theme should have dealt at length with the question why the industrial revolution began in England and not in France or elsewhere. England's commerce was in staples; France's in luxuries. England's markets were extended in Canada and India at the expense of France. And when Napoleon sought to capture the world, England captured the world's markets. Perhaps the author thought all this too obvious for emphasis. In a valuable, tho immature, chapter on the East India Company, the author shows how England's commerce affected England's industry. The East India Company imported Indian cottons to the detriment of English woolens and silk goods. Having acquired a taste for cottons, Englishmen set about to manufacture their own supply. In doing this the industrial revolution was started; the relatively cheap English machines — we may so state it — could compete with the relatively cheap Indian laborers. English capital, in other words, triumphed over Indian labor.

The third proposition is that industrial development can best be studied in its progression from one form to another. The author accepts Bücher's stages: household industry, wage work, handicraft ("craft work"), commission ("putting-out") system, and factory system. If English industry had been carefully traced through these stages and illustrated by facts and examples, our gratitude to the author would be considerable. Instead, he prefers to comment briefly on each, and then to deal at length with the last only. But the comment is to the point and instructive. Following the lead of Unwin, the author is inclined to restrict the scope of the handicraft system: "pure craft-work could not long main-

tain itself" (p. 217). In other words, very early in both town and country, one handicraftsman came to work for another who became the capitalist industrial employer, the organizer of the putting-out system. Even tho the organization of the industry had changed, the form of gild association remained outwardly the same. Hence the seriousness of the common error of calling the handicraft the "gild system."

In the putting-out system we have an industrial entrepreneur controlling manufacture. If he lived in a town, he was a member of a gild or livery company, if in the country he belonged to no association at all. In accepting this stage the author has followed German practice into difficulty and into error. For instance, he tells us of the yarn-spinners of Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, and Somersetshire, buying their own wool on the market and selling it to clothiers. These spinners he places in the putting-out system in spite of the fact that the original document specifically says that they "will not spin to the clothier for small wages." In other words nothing was put out or loaned, neither wool nor tools, neither food nor house. The workers were independent. If the author had sufficiently weighted this western English form of industry, and if he had made a study of the Yorkshire textile industry, he would have discovered that between the handicraft and the putting-out forms there is an intervening stage. Cunningham, following English practice, called this stage "domestic industry."

What is a factory? Lawyers, economists, and historians have disagreed. Usher makes it a matter of discipline and division of labor. In the absence of any accepted view, to dissent seems to involve little more than the expression of one's own opinion. If a stage intervening between the putting-out and the factory system were allowed for, some of the difficulties would be solved. Perhaps we should call the form of industry by which both discipline and the division of labor were developed the central workshop. We find it coming into being in the early modern period in Jack of Newbury's textile establishment with its 1000 (?) workers; in the Gobelin workshop; in the pottery of Meissen with its hundreds of work-

men; and in the eighteenth century silk mills of England. Later, power machinery came in, and to regularity of output and standardization of methods was added large-scale production, which is normally taken to be the mark of the factory.

Remembering the author's main thesis, that commerce conditions industry, we should expect to find each stage treated in the light of commerce, and each progressive move in industry linked with commercial changes. Wherever this is done, it is done effectively. But so much attention is given to secondary industrial phenomena and to manufacturing technique that little space is left for the main theme.

The industrial revolution is treated as a matter of the steady growth of capitalism in industry. It may be divided into phases: textile inventions, conception, struggle, achievement, climax, and conclusion (1914). To extend the industrial revolution over a period of two hundred (1700-1914) years makes it evolutionary, not revolutionary. Numerous have been the conceptions of the industrial revolution. Whatever else it was, the reviewer conceives it as a movement involving revolutionary changes and far-reaching results. As a movement it came to an end when another dominating movement came along. This was the revolution in transportation, begun by canal building (omitted by the author), and continued by the construction of railroads and the invention and perfecting of steamboats.

The recognition of old stages of industry, rather than the discovery of new ones, is obviously one of the main contributions of the book. Gradually in England and America, under the lead of Germany, the genetic viewpoint is gaining ground. Useful as Usher finds stages, and valuable as the genetic point of view is to him, he is nonetheless at all times consciously striving to master the stages and not to let them master him, to subordinate the genesis of industry, as he conceives it, to the history of industry as he finds it recorded in the sources. This distinction between genesis and history is further brought out by his preference for the word "form" rather than "stage."

A dominant note in this book is the recognition of the difficulty of writing it. Interpretation is "dangerous" (p. 135), the gild system is fraught with "obscurities and complexities" (p. 165), and the merchant gild "presents a most complex array of problems" (p. 171). The reiteration of such statements gives the impression of the hypercritical. To the maturer student this is perhaps salutary. But to the novice in economic history it is dangerous; and for the novice this book was written — for "an elementary class," for "college classes beginning work in economic history." As collateral reading, the book will be of value for college upper classes. But it hardly has a place as a text-book. The author in introducing a subject first presents the critical aspects of the matter at hand, then explains it. If the student survived this introduction, he would profit by what follows.

A fault that may be due to publisher rather than author, is the practice of putting in the text matter that clearly belongs to notes. The specialist will probably not be so much concerned with this, however, as with the absence of specific references on illustrations and questionable points to which he may wish to give attention. The selected list of books for further study will prove of great service to the advanced student. Yet it is difficult to account for some omissions, for example, why the tomb of Rekhmara is listed for study and not those of Beni Hasan, and why Gonner's work on the enclosures is recommended while nothing is said about Tawney's *Agrarian Problem*.

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